

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03
INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4345
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 21723

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN, EAID, GW, CG
SUBJECT: DOMSAT AND ZAIRIAN ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

REF: (A) KINSHASA 10155; (B) STATE 301760;
(C) STATE 301761; (D) STATE 310648

1. FOREIGN OFFICE AND FINMIN OFFICIALS WERE UNAWARE OF
DOMSAT PROJECT AND COULD GIVE EMBOFF ONLY PRELIMINARY
(AND PERSONAL) REACTIONS TO OUR POSITION. EMBOFF WAS
UNABLE TO CONTACT GEHRING IN ECONMIN (FRG PARIS CLUB
REPRESENTATIVE AND CHAIRMAN OF INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE
ON MULTILATERAL DEBT RESCHEDULING), WHO IS ON VACATION
UNTIL JANUARY 5.

2. EMBOFF GAVE DETAILS OF PROJECT PER REF A AND
EXPLAINED U.S. POSITION AND PLANNED ACTIONS PER REF
B, C, AND D. NEITHER FINMIN OR FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS
HAD ANY PROBLEM WITH THE BASIC FEATURES OF OUR
POSITION BUT THEY WERE UNWILLING TO EXPRESS ANY SUPPORT
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AT THIS TIME. FINMIN OFFICIAL OBSERVED THAT THE
CONTRACT WAS LARGELY A MATTER BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND
ZAIRE AND THAT IF THE PROJECT WAS AGREED UPON LAST
AUGUST THERE WOULD BE NO EASY WAY TO CONVINCE THE GOZ
THAT THEIR ACTION VIOLATES ARRANGEMENT WITH THE IMF.
3. FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE

CONTRACT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CONCLUDED BEFORE THE IMF AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO FORCE AND THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO PRESS ZAIRE ON THIS ISSUE. HE SHARED OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE ZAIRIAN DECISION TO TAKE ON ADDITIONAL DEBT AND HE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL FOR THE FRG TO CONTACT THE FRENCH BILATERALLY AND TO OBTAIN THEIR VIEWS ON THE ISSUE. RATHER THAN USE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, HE BELIEVED THAT THE EC WORKING GROUP ON EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEES MIGHT BE A PLACE TO RAISE THE ISSUE INFORMALLY. SINCE FRANCE CHAIRS THE PARIS CLUB, HE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT IT WOULD BE MOST LOGICAL TO HEAR FRENCH OUT FIRST.

4. COMMENT. AS INDICATED ABOVE, FINMIN AND FOREIGN OFFICE REACTIONS WERE VERY PRELIMINARY AND WE DO NOT BELIEVE MUCH WEIGHT SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THEM. VIEWS OF GEHRING AND ECONMIN WILL WEIGH HEAVILY IN THIS MATTER AND WE WILL ALERT GEHRING WHEN HE RETURNS JANUARY 5. AT THE SAME TIME, WE SEE LITTLE POSSIBILITY THAT THE FRG WOULD ACTIVELY LOBBY AGAINST THE FRENCH/ZAIRIAN AGREEMENT SINCE IT IS A FAIT ACCOMPLI AND APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SIGNED PRIOR TO THE IMF AGREEMENT. WHILE IT IS CLEAR THAT THE FRG AGREES WITH US ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE MATTER, THEY PROBABLY ARE DUBIOUS THAT EITHER THEIR EFFORTS OR OURS WILL CHANGE THE SITUATION. OUR EXPERIENCE ALSO SUGGESTS FRG WILL BE RELUCTANT TO OPPOSE DOMSAT IF FRENCH GOVERNMENT GIVES THE TRANSACTION ITS SUPPORT.
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